



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

August 13, 2015

Pence: Reserves could be used to shore up roads

Indianapolis Star
Chelsea Schneider
8/12/15

Gov. Mike Pence is considering dipping into the state's \$2.14 billion in reserves in what he described as a near-term solution to offer funding for infrastructure improvements. Pence's comments on Wednesday follow a bridge closure on I-65 in Lafayette last week that's forced motorists to take a detour off the busy highway. Pence said his administration is looking at some options during the upcoming legislative session that begins in January to free up resources to invest in infrastructure. However, Pence said no decisions have been made, including how much of the state's reserves could go toward roads. Republican legislative leaders already have talked about infrastructure being the focus of the 2017 session where lawmakers will write a new state budget. Pence said he's supportive of those discussions. "If you are going to be the Crossroads of America, you better have the roads to back it up," Pence said. "We're looking now in the short term at some opportunities for us to strengthen infrastructure across the state." On the I-65 bridge closure, Pence said the Indiana Department of Transportation made the right decision. The state is working with the contractor on the scene to provide a time frame of when the bridge will be repaired and reopened, he said. "The economic impact is very significant," Pence said. "This is a major artery of commerce for the state of Indiana, and we're going to work 24/7 to determine how quickly we can get that back open to the public."

[Pence: Reserves could be used to shore up roads](#) Also, [Pence open to infrastructure aid | Indiana | Journal Gazette](#)

No-tax pledge clouds Indiana's road funding debate

Tribune Star
Maureen Hayden
8/12/15

Back in 1998, then-candidate Bob Cherry made a promise never to raise taxes. Seventeen years later, as the state needs billions of dollars to fix its crumbling roads and bridges, the Greenfield lawmaker wonders if it was a mistake. "How can we make good public policy for the future if we're tied to the past?" he said. Cherry, a Republican, is one of 27 Indiana lawmakers who've signed the Americans for Tax Reform's so-called taxpayer protection pledge. And he's not the only one who now says the promise is putting them in a tight spot, especially in light of the indefinite shutdown of Interstate 65 near Lafayette due to a deteriorating bridge sinking into the ground. The bridge, which typically carries 20,000 vehicles per day, and more than 350 others maintained by the state are deemed structurally deficient. Transportation officials say that number will double in less than a decade without an injection of money into the state's highway fund. Cherry, a vice-chairman of the House's Ways and Means Committee, said he fears the no-tax pledge will keep

the General Assembly from acting on a long-delayed but needed solution. General Assembly from acting on a long-delayed but needed solution. "We made this pledge to people who are from outside our state, who know nothing about us now," he said. "They don't understand. Things change." The pledge, created in 1986 by anti-tax activist Grover Norquist, locks signatories into a promise never to create new taxes or raise existing ones as long the pledge-maker holds office. Nearly all 54 Republican U.S. Senators and 245 members of Congress have signed, according to the group, as have 13 governors and hundreds of state legislators. Cherry and other Republicans happily signed on, too, he said, to demonstrate their commitment to fiscal conservatism.
[No-tax pledge clouds Indiana's road funding debate - Terre Haute Tribune Star: Local News](#)

Bangert: I-65 closure just a hint of the future?

Journal & Courier

Dave Bangert

8/11/15

As if it couldn't get worse on Interstate 65, where a bridge over the Wildcat Creek has been closed since Friday and state transportation officials couldn't say when torturous detours would end, someone dared to utter these two chilling words: "Lindberg Road." Of course, Lindberg Road, which crosses the Celery Bog, was a West Lafayette nightmare, with a cycle of sink-close-repair-repeat for more than a decade before it was replaced four years ago by the bridge that stands there now. Shudder to think, but is that what the driving public is in for this time, too, with I-65? Maybe sensing the fear and dread accompanied by the question in the wake of a Monday afternoon press conference, Anne Rearick, Indiana Department of Transportation's director of bridges, quickly reeled in that scenario. "This is a very different situation," Rearick said, slightly shaking her head toward another INDOT official, as if to say: Let's not use Lindberg Road as a reference point, again. Still, we're days away from even knowing how long the northbound lanes of I-65 will be closed just north of Indiana 26 in Lafayette. "I think foreseeable future is a good estimate," Brandye Hendrickson, INDOT commissioner, said during an update at Purdue University's Bowen Laboratory. A quarter-mile away, trucks on U.S. 231 were crossing River Road, halfway through a winding detour that had been eased over the weekend by the addition of temporary traffic lights at key intersections but that was still gumming up hours in commute time.
<http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/columnists/dave-bangert/2015/08/10/bangert-closure-just-hint-future/31433071/>